

BUREAU OF THE BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

February 16, 1970

CIRCULAR NO. A-44
Revised

TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Establishment of a management improvement program
applicable to all Government operations

1. Purpose and coverage.

a. This Circular establishes a formal Government-wide management improvement program and is effective immediately. It supersedes and rescinds Circular No. A-44, Revised, dated August 3, 1966.

b. Improving the efficiency and economy of Government operations is a major concern of the President. Therefore, each individual in Government should be motivated to be constantly alert to the development and application of better ways to perform day-to-day tasks. However, for many programs, functions, and activities, management effectiveness and efficiency cannot be measured or evaluated in terms of dollars saved. Many of these operations, such as services to the public, represent some of the most important governmental activities and potential areas for management improvement. Therefore, it is vital that the ability exist to establish objectives, measure performance, and evaluate results in all areas of governmental activity.

A combination of emphases on individual management actions and total management efforts applied to selected priority areas, permits both the measurement of cost reduction and the effectiveness of intensive management attention. The management improvement program thus recognizes that management improvement actions can generate dollar savings, system benefits, or both.

c. The management improvement program will consist of five inter-related elements:

- (1) Management effectiveness;
- (2) Cost reduction;
- (3) Idea interchange;
- (4) Presidential recognition of exceptional improvement actions;
- (5) Periodic study of Government-wide operations.

This Circular sets forth policies, procedures, guidelines, and responsibilities for carrying out these elements. It applies to all executive departments and agencies and is effective immediately.

2. Reporting. An annual management improvement report covering the program elements will be prepared in accordance with the requirements and definitions contained in Attachment A and submitted in duplicate to the President, through the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, by September 30 of each year. The first report will be due on September 30, 1970.

3. Management effectiveness. It has long been recognized that management progress in many functions and activities cannot always be measured on the basis of dollars saved. Many of these functions contain a significant potential for management improvement but require a system for identifying quantitative measures of performance, establishing performance goals, measuring performance, analyzing the results, and initiating corrective actions. Therefore each department and agency head will establish a formal, organized management effectiveness program to serve this purpose. The objective of this program is to concentrate management attention on persistent problem areas of high level priority. These areas will be identified by a systematic review of agency activities and operations. The program is designed to increase the emphasis on and give recognition to the total management efforts of an agency on improving effectiveness in identified problem areas or activities.

Agency management will identify and spotlight operating problem areas or activities of high priority with a view toward developing and implementing corrective courses of action. This requires in-depth assessment of existing functions, activities, and procedures. In establishing a management effectiveness program, the following policies will be observed:

a. The formal management effectiveness program will require establishing a management system for identifying quantitative goals in the selected problem areas, evaluating performance, and identifying further action as appropriate.

b. Areas for inclusion will be selected in a manner which assures that priority attention is concentrated where the greatest needs exist.

c. Each specific problem or activity will be added to or eliminated from the program by the agency, based on the acceptability of performance being achieved.

d. Performance results reported for each area selected will represent the combined effect of all management actions taken for that area.

e. Performance indicators will be expressed in quantitative terms of units, tons, percentages, gross dollars, items, or other standards of measure most appropriate for the individual area(s) selected for study. However, it is recognized that indicators chosen are measures of performance, and agency evaluation of the problem area usually will involve additional factors, some of which cannot be reduced to quantitative terms.

f. In most cases, existing data will be sufficient for evaluation. However, when major deficiencies or voids in the data are identified, a new data base will be established to obtain the information necessary to measure and evaluate performance.

g. If dollar savings are achieved, the results will also be reported under the cost reduction element.

4. Cost reduction.

a. Policy. The following policies will be observed in continuing agency cost reduction activities:

(1) The head of each department and agency will assume personal responsibility for improving the efficiency and economy of his agency programs and activities.

(2) Management at all levels will undertake vigorous and continued efforts to improve operating procedures and techniques, eliminate nonessential activities and positions, and increase productivity.

(3) Agencies will make every effort to accomplish unprogrammed workload requirements without additional staff resources through adjustments in previously programmed requirements and existing activities and by improving manpower control and utilization.

b. Cost reduction plans. Each department and agency head will prepare specific plans which will systematically:

(1) Identify and eliminate or curtail low priority and marginally effective activities;

(2) Develop new and less costly methods of achieving program objectives; and

(3) Encourage innovation and ingenuity in the development of new and improved techniques for increasing productivity.

c. Monetary goals. At the beginning of the current fiscal year, department and agency heads will establish a cost reduction goal. The goal for the current year will represent the savings expected to be realized from new and improved management actions compared with the actual cost in the immediately preceding year, or the most recently incurred costs, whichever is appropriate. In addition to this required overall goal, each agency should establish subgoals for major activities or organizational elements.

d. Monetary savings.

(1) Cost reductions reported annually must be the result of deliberate managerial actions taken for the purpose of raising effectiveness or efficiency as opposed to management actions taken to carry out some public policy. Only reductions in costs or increases in revenues and fund availability which can be attributed to new or improved management actions will be reported as monetary savings under this program.

(2) Monetary savings for the purpose of cost reduction reporting do not include such things as:

- Reductions in outlays due solely to a decline in demand for agency output.
- Reductions in outlays due to deferment of programs or activities.
- Reductions in outlays of a department or agency as a result of transferring responsibility for a function to another agency, except to the extent of a net savings to the Government.
- Prevention of increases in operating costs resulting from use of voluntary uncompensated overtime, rather than increased staffing or paid overtime.
- Reduction in outlays based on the acquisition of excess property when funds for the purchases of similar new property were not or normally would not have been available.
- Reduction in outlays resulting from decisions made by authorities external to the reporting agency.

e. Measurement of monetary savings. The monetary savings which result or are expected to result from each new or improved management action will be calculated, separately identified, and reported for each of three fiscal years--the year in which the action is taken and, where applicable, the next two succeeding fiscal years. The savings reported for the first year will represent the funds made available as a result of new or improved management actions and

additional revenue resulting from such actions. The savings reported for each of the next two fiscal years will represent an estimate of the amount of additional funds which would be required in each of the years if the new or improved management actions had not taken place. Planned expenditures which result from congressionally approved appropriations for the department or agency in the past year, or the most recently incurred costs, whichever is appropriate, will be used as a base in determining monetary savings. The actual savings in the past year and the estimated savings in the next two fiscal years will be dropped from the reporting system after each annual report.

f. Identification, control, and use of savings. Each executive department and agency head will establish controls to assure that funds made available by cost reduction actions are used only for approved programs. The following categories, designated by (1), (2) or (3), will be used to identify the effect and use of past year savings:

(1) Used to finance other approved requirements of the reporting unit.

(2) Reprogrammed to another appropriation or budget activity to finance other approved requirements. When this code is used, the anticipated use of the funds in the gaining appropriation or budget activity will be reported.

(3) Placed in reserve, or applied to reducing the President's budget.

Savings realized during the past year constitute additional resources for the agency to use. These savings may be reprogrammed to accomplish currently approved programs and activities which were not funded in the agency's past year budget. The current-year and budget-year effect of cost reduction actions must be identified so that appropriate consideration can be made in the budget formulation and review process for requirements that no longer exist in those years.

g. Validations of savings. Each department and agency head will establish an internal system for the validation of reported savings.

The term "validation" means an independent evaluation of the reasonableness and validity of amounts reported as savings. Responsibility for validation should be assigned to an organization independent of the claiming unit.

For the purposes of this Circular, validation will consist of a review of an adequate number of individual savings actions before data and reports are submitted to the Bureau of the Budget and the President. In establishing the scope of examination, the cost of validation will be weighed against the potential benefits to be gained.

The specific validation procedures used in each department and agency should be designed to meet individual situations encountered. Such procedures should be designed to provide reasonable assurance that:

- (1) Reported actions actually took place;
- (2) The savings reported represent reasonable computations and estimates of the savings which occur in the year reported and are the result of specific new or improved management actions; and
- (3) Reported savings are net of identifiable offsetting cost increases.

5. Idea interchange. An essential element of the management improvement program is the Government-wide dissemination of management improvement information applicable to other organizations. Each agency should have an internal system for distributing information on management improvement actions to all of its organizational elements.

For external distribution of information, each agency will identify in its annual management improvement report actions considered applicable to other departments and agencies. Include a description of the action, methodology used, and any new approaches or techniques applied.

Items chosen should be carefully screened for relevance to other Government agencies. The descriptions should be concise and include a point of contact for further information. The Bureau of the Budget will consolidate the descriptions and distribute them to all agencies.

6. Program incentives. In order for the management improvement program to be successful, personnel at all levels of an organization must be motivated to seek ways to improve management and efficiency in Government. For internal motivation, each agency should employ a variety of techniques to stimulate improvement actions. These techniques include: award ceremonies, certificates of merit, letters of appreciation, recognition through publicity media, symposiums and workshops, money rewards (via the Incentive Awards Program), etc. The objectives of these techniques are: (a) to cause a person to think innovatively; (b) to cause him to act on his innovative ideas; and (c) to cause him to report his action in the management improvement program.

In order to provide high level recognition of outstanding performances, each agency head will have the opportunity to make nominations for Presidential recognition. These will include individuals and organizational units which have done an exceptional job of reducing costs or improving operating effectiveness within their agency or on

a Government-wide basis. The nominations should include a detailed description of the efforts involved and the results achieved, and will be included in the management improvement report. They will be reviewed by the President's Advisory Council on Management Improvement which will recommend to the President the individuals and organizations to receive Presidential recognition.

7. Periodic study of Government-wide operations. Periodically, the Bureau of the Budget will choose a common operational area for Government-wide study. For each study area, an interagency steering group will be established to coordinate the effort and write a final report on the results and conclusions of the study.

Agency management will focus on the selected areas and submit a report on accomplishments which will include resulting dollar savings, management improvement actions taken, and plans for future improvements and controls in the area. Possible areas for study may include common administrative functions, records management, travel and transportation, communications, printing and reproduction, etc.

The Bureau of the Budget will notify agencies of the start of this program element and will transmit detailed instructions.

ROBERT P. MAYO
Director

Attachment